A DRAVGHT OF A SPEECH CONCERNING EPISCOPACY.

BY THE LORD *VISCOVNT FALKLAND.*

Found since his Death amongst his papers Written with *his own hand.*

OXFORD,
Printed by LEONARD LICHFIELD, Printer *to the Vniversity*, 1644.

A SKETCH
OF A
PLEA
CONCERNING
LIBERTY,
BY THE LORD
VISCOUNT STAIR.

Found Thursday last, and left with
this Paper's Author, with
the same Hand.

Printed by Leonard Lichfield, Printer
to the University, 1684.

Mr Speaker,

WHosoever desires this totall change of our present government, desires it either out of a conceit that it is *unlawfull*, or *inconvenient*. To both these I shall say something. To the first, being able to make no such arguments to prove it so my selfe, as I conceive likely to be made within the walls of so wise a House, I can make no answer to them till I heare them from some other, which then (if they perswade me not) by the liberty of a Committee I shall doe. But this in generall in the meantime I shall say, that the ground of this government of Episcopacy being so ancient, and so generall, so uncontradicted in the first and best times, that our most laborious Antiquaries can find no Nation, no City, no Church, nor Houses under any other, that our first Ecclesiasticall Authors tell us, that the Apostles not only allowed but founded Bishops, so that the tradition for some books of Scripture which we receive as Canonicall, is both lesse ancient, lesse generall, and lesse uncontradicted. I must ask leave to say, that though the mystery of iniquity began suddenly to worke, yet it did not instantly prevaile, it could not ayme at the end of the race, as soon as it was started, nor could Anti-christianisme in so short a time have become so Catholique.

To the ſecond, this I ſay, that in this government there is no *inconvenience* which might not be ſufficiently remedied without deſtroying the whole, and though we had not paird their nailes, or rather their Tongues, I mean the High-Commiſſion, though we ſhould neither give them the direction of ſtrict rules, nor the addition of choyce Aſſiſters (both which we may doe and ſuddenly I hope we ſhall) yet the feare ſunk into them of this Parliament, and the expectation of a Triennial one, would be ſuch bankes to theſe rivers, that we need feare their inundations no more.

Next I ſay, that if ſome inconvenience did appeare in this, yet ſince it may alſo appeare that the change will breed greater, I deſire thoſe who are led to change by inconveniences only, that they will ſuſpend their opinions, till they ſee what is to be laid in the other ballance, which I will endeavour.

The inconveniences of the change are double, ſome that it ſhould be yet done, others that it ſhould be at all done. the firſt again double, becauſe we have not done what we ſhould doe firſt, and becauſe others have not done what they ſhould doe firſt. That which we ſhould doe firſt, is to agree of a ſucceeding Forme of Government, that every man, when he gives his Vote to the deſtruction of this, may be ſure that he deſtroyes not that which he likes better then that which ſhall ſucceed it. I conceive no man will at this time give this Vote, who doth not believe this Government to be the worſt that can poſſibly be deviſed, and for my part if this be thus prepoſterouſly done, and we left in this blind uncertainty, what ſhall become of us, I ſhall not only doubt all the inconveniences which any Go-

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vernment hath, but which any Government may have. This I insist on the rather, because if we should find cause to wish for this back again we could not have it, the means being dispersst, to restore it again would be a miracle in State, like that of the resurrection to Nature.

That which others should do first, is, to be gone. For if you will do this, yet things standing as they do, no great cause appearing for so great a change, I feare a great Army may be thought to be the cause, and I therefore desire (to be sure that *Newcastle* may not be suspected to have any influence upon *London*) that this may not be done till our Brethren be returned to their Patrimony.

We are now past the inconveniences in point of time, I now proceed, and my first inconvenience of this change is the inconvenience of change it selfe, which is so great an inconvenience, when the change is great and suddain, that in such cases, when it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change. To a person formerly intemperate I have known the first prescription of an excellent Physitian to forbeare too good a diet for a good while. We have lived long happily and gloriously under this Forme of Government, it hath very well agreed with the constitution of our Lawes, with the disposition of our People, how any other will doe, I the lesse know, because I know not of any other, of which so much as any other Monarchy hath had any experience, they all having (as I conceive) at least Superintendents for life, and the meer word Bishop, I suppose, is no mans aime to destroy, nor no mans aime to defend.

Next, Sir, I am of opinion, that most men desire not this change, or else I am certain there hath been very suddenly a great change in men; severall Petitions indeed desire it, but knowing how concern'd and how united that party is, how few would be wanting to so good a worke, even those hands which values their number to others, are an argument of their paucity to me. The numberlesse number of those of a different sense appeare not so publiquely and cry not so loud, being persons more quiet, as secure in the goodnesse of their Lawes, and the wisdome of their Law-makers, and because men Petition for what they have not, and not for what they have, perhaps that the Bishops may not know how many friends their Order hath, least they be incouraged to abuse their authority, if they knew it to be so generally approved. Now, Sir, though we are trusted by those that sent us, in cases wherein their opinions were unknown, yet truly if I knew the opinion of the major part of my Town, I doubt whether it were the intention of those that trusted me, that I should follow my own opinion against theirs, at least let us stay till the next Session, and consult more particularly with them about it.

Next, Sir, it will be the destruction of many estates, in which many, who may be very innocent persons, are legally vested, and of many persons who undoubtedly are innocent, whose dependances are upon those estates; the Apostle saith, he that provides not for his family, is worse then an Infidell, this belongs in some analogy to us, and truly, Sir, we provide ill for our family the Common-wealth, if we suffer a considerable part of it to be turned out of doores, so that, for any

care is taken by this bill for new dwelling, (and I will never consent they shall play an after game for all they have) either we must see them starve in the streets before us, or to avoid that, must ship them some whether away like the Moores out of Spaine.

From the hurt of the Learned I come to that of Learning, and desire you to consider, whether when all considerable maintenance shall be reduced to cure of soules, all studies will not be reduced to those which are in order to Preaching; the Arts and Languages and even eminent skill in Controversies, to which great leasure and great meanes is required, much neglected, and to the joy and gain of our common adversary, Syntagmes, Postylles, Catechismes, Commentators, and Concordances almost only bought, and the rest of Libraries remain rather as of ornament, then as of use. I doe not deny but for all this want, the wit of some hath attempted both, and the parts of some few have served to discharge both, and those of *Calvin* to advise about and dispatch more Temporall businesse into the bargain, then all our Privy-Councell. yet such abilities are extreamly rare, and very few will ever Preach twice a Sunday and be my match for *Bellarmine*; nay I feare, Sir, that this will make us to have fewer able even in Preaching it selfe, as it is separated from generall Learning, for I feare many whose parts, friends and meanes, might make them hope for better advancements in other courses, when these shall be taken away from this, will be lesse ready to imbrace it; and though it were to be wished, that all men should only undertake those Embassages with reference

rence to his honour whose Embassadors they are, yet I doubt not but many who have entred into the Church by the Doore, or rather by the Window, have done it after great and sincere service, and better reasons have made them labour in the vineyard then brought them thither at first; and though the meer love of God ought to make us good, though there were no reward or punishment, yet it would be very incovenient to piety, that hope of Heaven and feare of Hell were taken away.

My next inconvenience I feare, is this, that if we should take away a Government which hath as much testimony of the first antiquity to have been founded by the Apostles, as can be brought for some parts of Scripture to have been written by them, least this may avert some of our Church from us, and rivit some of the Roman Church to her, and as I remember, the Apostle commands us to be carefull not to give scandall even to those that are without. Sir, it hath been said, that we have a better way to know Scripture then by Tradition, I dispute not this, Sir, but I know that Tradition is the only argument to prove Scripture to another, and the first to every mans selfe, being compared to the Samaritan Womans report, which made many first believe in Christ, though they after believed him for himselfe, and I therefore would not have this so farre weakned to us, as to take away Episcopacy as unlawfull, which is so farre by Tradition proved to be lawfull.

My next inconvenience that I feare, is this, having observed those generally who are against Bishops

shops (I will not now speak of such as are among us, who by being selected from the rest are to be hoped to be freer then ordinary from vulgar passions) to have somewhat more animosity against those who are for them, then *vice versâ*; least when they shall have prevailed against the Bishops, they be so farre enraged against their partakers, & will so have discouraged their adversaries, as in time to induce a necessity upon others at least of the Clergy to believe them as unlawfull as they themselves doe, and to assent to other of their opinions yet left at large: which will be a way to deprive us I think of not our worst, I am sure of our most learned Ministers, and to send a greater Colonie to *New England*, then it hath been said this Bill will recall from thence.

I come now from the inconveniences of taking away this Government to the inconveniences of that which shall succeed it: and to this I can speake but by guesse, and groping, because I have no light given me what that shall be, onely I hope I shall be excused for shooting at randome, since you will set me up no Butt to shoot at. The first I feare the Scotch Government will either presently be taken, or if any other succeed for a while, yet the unity and industry of those of that opinion in this Nation, assisted by the counsell and friendship of that, will shortly bring it in, if any lesse opposite Government to it be here placed then that of Episcopacy. And indeed, Sir, since any other Government then theirs will by no meanes give any satisfaction to their desire of uniformity; since all they who see not the dishonour and ill consequences of it, will

be unwilling to deny their Brethren what they esteeme indifferent, since our owne Government being destroyed we shall in all likelyhood be apter to receive that which is both neer at hand and ready made: For these reasons I look upon it as probable, and for the following ones, as inconvenient.

When some Bishops pretended to *Iure divino* (though nothing so likely to be beleived by the People as these would be, not consequently to hurt us by that pretence) this was cryed out upon as destructive to His Majesties Supremacy, who was to be confessed to be the fountaine of jurisdiction in this Kingdome. Yet to *Iure divino* that Ecclesiasticall government pretends, to meet when they please, to Treat of what they please, to excommunicate whom they please, even Parliaments themselves: so farre are they from receiving either rules or punishments from them. And for us to bring in any unlimited, any independent authority, the first is against the Liberty of the Subject, the second against the Right and Priviledge of Parliament, and both against the Protestation.

But he saith, that this unlimitednesse and independencie is only in spirituall things. I first answer that arbitrary government beeing the worst of governments, and our bodies being worse then our soules, it will be strong to set up that over the second, of which we were so impatient over the first. Secondly, that M. *Selden* speaking about the Power of the Clergy to make Canons to bind, did excellently informe us what a mighty influence spirituall power hath upon temporall affaires, so that if our Clergy had the one, they had in-

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clusively almost all the other. And to this I may adde, what all men may see, the vast Temporall power of the Pope allow'd him by such who allow it him only *in ordine ad spiritualia*: for the fable will tell you, if you make the Lyon judge (and the Clergy assisted by the people is Lyon enough) it was a wise feare of the Foxes, least he might call a knubbe a horne. And sure Sir, they will in this case be judges, not only of that which is spirituall, but of what it is that is so: and the people receiving instruction from no other, will take the most Temporall matter to be Spirituall, if they tell them it is so.

FINIS.